

PATENT
450119-4958**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith. The present After-Final Amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application and does not require further search.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-12, 13-15, and 17-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 5, 9, and 13, which are independent, are hereby amended to incorporate the features of claims 4, 8, 12, and 16. Claims 4, 8, 12, and 16 are hereby canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4, 8, 12 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,591,057 to Nagasawa, et al.

U.S. Patent No. 6,591,057 to Nagasawa, et al. (hereinafter, merely "Nagasawa") is disqualified as §103 prior art to the present application under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 103(c). Under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 103(c), as amended on November 29, 1999, subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under one of more of subsections (e), (f) and (g) of 35 U.S.C. 102, shall not preclude patentability under §103 where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person or organization.

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Nagasawa and the present application were, at the time the present invention was made, subject to an obligation of assignment to the same organization, i.e., Sony Corporation. Such obligation is evidenced by the recording of assignment documents in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Accordingly, Nagasawa is disqualified as prior art in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a); and thus all of the outstanding rejections based upon Nagasawa in the above-noted Office Action are overcome.

Therefore, claim 1, 5, 9, and 13 are believed to be patentable.

III. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

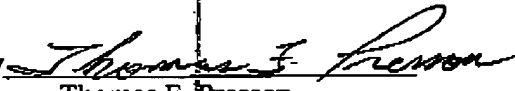
The other claims are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the above-identified reasons.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that this After-Final Amendment does not require further search and that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request entry of this After-Final Amendment and early passage to issue of the present application.

Please charge any fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,
FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
Attorneys for Applicants

By 
Thomas F. Presson
Reg. No. 41,442
(212) 588-0800